

## First Authenticated Record of the Goldspotted Sand Bass, *Paralabrax auroguttatus* from California Waters

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We report on the first authenticated record of the goldspotted sand bass, *Paralabrax auroguttatus* Walford, 1936, in California marine waters (Fig. 1). The fish, a mature female, was 50.0 cm TL (48 cm FL, 42.2 cm SL), and was taken on 30 July 2018, on a rocky reef (34°20.730'N, 119°36.671'W) at a depth of 46 m, off Santa Barbara, California. Fishes captured on the same reef included *Sebastes auriculatus* (brown rockfish), *Sebastes caurinus* (copper rockfish), *Sebastes miniatus* (vermilion rockfish), and *Ophiodon elongatus* (lingcod).

We determined the identity of the specimen using the characters highlighted by Robertson and Allen (2015) as differentiating this species from other serranids: “numerous golden-orange to brownish spots, back with 2–3 thin pale stripes; lining of gill cavity orange” and a “third [dorsal] spine greatly elevated, over three times longer than second.” In addition, meristic counts of our specimen are within those listed in Love and Passarelli (in press; Table 1). A second tropical *Paralabrax*, *Paralabrax loro* Walford, 1936, also lives off Mexico. However, we excluded this species because *P. loro* has a series of dark bars on the flanks and an oval white blotch under the posterior dorsal spines and these are lacking in *P. auroguttatus*. In addition, *P. loro* lacks the pale, thin dorsal stripes of *P. auroguttatus* (Robertson and Allen 2015). This specimen is deposited at the Los Angeles Museum of Natural History (LACM 59462-1).

*Paralabrax auroguttatus* was first described from Guaymas, Mexico (Walford 1936). It grows to at least 71 cm FL (Fitch and Schultz 1978) and inhabits reefs at depths of at least 2–183 m (5–600 ft) (min.: SIO 65-296; max.: M. L., unpubl. data). Before this capture, *P. auroguttatus* was known from just north of Punta Rosalia (28°40'N, 114°16'W) (M. L., unpubl. data) and Isla Cedros, central Baja California (Ramírez-Valdez et al. 2015) to the Gulf of California (Eschmeyer and Herald 1983) and to central Mexico (Robertson and Allen 2015).

We note that there is one previous likely documented record of this species from California marine waters. In the 1976 addendum to Miller and Lea (1972), John Fitch described the capture of a 45.7 cm [listed as 18 in] TL fish taken on a commercial passenger fishing vessel in 1975 [date in Fitch and Schultz 1978], perhaps near Redondo Beach, southern California, in about 61 m [listed as 200 ft in the addendum]. While neither the specimen nor a photograph of the specimen were available to Mr. Fitch, he considered that the description given him by the vessel operator to “fit no other species.”

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Fig. 1. A goldspotted sand bass, *Paralabrax auroguttatus*, taken on 30 July 2018, on a rocky reef at a depth of 46 m, off Santa Barbara, California at 34°20.730'N, 119°36.671'W.

Table 1. Meristics of Goldspotted Sand Bass, *Paralabrax auroguttatus* Walford, 1936, from this study and from Love and Passarelli (2019).

Source	Dorsal Fin	Anal fin	Pectoral Fin	Gill rakers 1 <sup>st</sup> Arch
This study	X, 14	III,7	16	6+17
Love and Passarelli (2019)	X,13–14	III,7	14–16	6+17

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